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REMARKS

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, Claims 8-10, 17-19, 26-27, 34-35 and 37 are pending in this application. The Examiner rejected Claims 1-37 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) and objected to the specification for some informalities. Claims 1-7, 11-16, 20-25, 28-33, and 36 have been cancelled, and Claims 8, 17, 26, 27, 34, and 37 have been amended in the foregoing amendment. The specification has also been amended to correct certain grammatical errors.

Haber, Rohatgi, and Schneier Do Not Show or Suggest the Invention of Claims 8-10, 17-19, 26-27, 34-35, and 37

The Examiner rejected Claims 8-10, 17-19, 26-27, 34-35, and 37 being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,136,647 to Haber et al. ("*Haber*") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,625,693 to Rohatgi et al. ("*Rohatgi*"), and further in view of Schneier, Applied Cryptography 2nd Edition ("*Schneier*"). The cited references do not teach or suggest the invention of Claims 8-10, 17-19, 26-27, 34-35, and 37.

Claim 8

The time stamping system as defined in Claim 8 requires, among other elements, a plurality of time acquisition units, each time acquisition unit sequentially acquiring the time information given in a prescribed constant incremental time unit, in response to the time stamping request, independently from other time acquisition units; a plurality of combining units, provided in correspondence to the plurality of time acquisition units, each combining unit generating a plurality of time stamped digital documents by sequentially combining data containing the unified digest with the time information sequentially acquired by a corresponding one of the time acquisition units, independently from other combining units; a plurality of digital signature units, provided in correspondence to the plurality of combining units, each digital signature unit generating a digital signature for each time stamped digital document generated by a corresponding one of the combining units, independently from other digital signature units; and a unified digital signature

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generation unit for selecting a plurality of digital signatures, one digital signature per each digital signature unit, which are generated by the plurality of digital signature units for one time stamped digital document of an identical time, from a plurality of digital signatures generated by the plurality of digital signature units, and generating a unified digital signature from the selected digital signatures.

The Examiner admitted that *Haber* is silent on the matter of a plurality of digital signature units formed from a plurality of time acquisition units to form a unified digital signature and corresponding token. However, the Examiner contended that one principle means of ensuring the legitimacy of a timestamp is to receive partial timestamps from a plurality of producers to create a legitimate timestamp and that the idea is disclosed as "secret splitting" in *Schneier*. The cited section of *Schneier* (page 70-71) describes that secret splitting is to divide a secret message into pieces such that the information that each piece contains by itself means nothing, but when all the pieces are put together, the secret message can be obtained. Another cited section of *Schneier* (page 76, 'Improved Arbitrated Solution') describes that a timestamp generator receives a hash from a sender, appends a timestamp, digitally signs the result, and then sends the signed hash with timestamp back to the sender. However, the cited sections of *Schneier* do not disclose how to make the independently acquired times from each of the time acquisition units coincide. The cited sections of *Schneier* only describe distributing pieces to transmit secret information, and fail to describe how to obtain time coincidence among the time stamps of a plurality of time-stamping stations, thus improving the legitimacy of the time stamp, as recited in Claim 8.

Accordingly, Claim 8 would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill from the cited references at the time the Applicant made the claimed invention. Accordingly, Claim 8 should be allowed.

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Claims 9 and 10

Claims 9 and 10 depend from independent Claim 8. The remarks made above in support of the independent claims are equally applicable to distinguish the dependent claims from the cited references. Accordingly, Claims 9 and 10 should also be allowed.

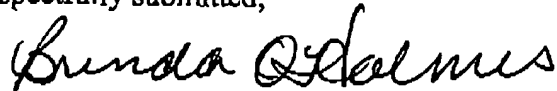
Claims 17-19, 26-27, 34-35 and 37

Claims 17-19, 26-27, 34-35, and 37 have similar limitations to Claim 8. Thus, the remarks made above in support of Claim 8 are also applicable to distinguish these claims from the cited references. Accordingly, Claims 17-19, 26-27, 34-35, and 37 should also be allowed.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing is submitted as a complete response to the Office Action identified above. This application should now be in condition for allowance, and the Applicants solicit a notice to that effect. If there are any issues that can be addressed via telephone, the Examiner is asked to contact the undersigned at 404.685.6799.

Respectfully submitted,



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